D. O'Brien
Limerick
1874

A

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

FOR

IRELAND:

A SPEECH

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, IN MOVING FOR LEAVE TO BRING IN A BILL TO MAKE BETTER PROVISION FOR UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN IRELAND,

MAY 16TH, 1876.

BY

ISAAC BUTT,

MEMBER FOR THE CITY OF LIMERICK.

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UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN IRELAND.

MR. BUTT said:

In accordance, sir, with the notice I have given, I move for leave to bring in a Bill to make better provision for University Education in Ireland. I do not anticipate that any opposition will be offered to that motion, but although the Bill which I hold in my hand has been prepared before the Session commenced, I have deferred moving for its introduction until I could have an opportunity of making a statement as to its object and provisions.

In doing so I may be permitted to say that I know of no subject of greater importance to the people of Ireland. I know none of greater difficulty. I need scarcely remind the House that three years ago it led to the overthrow of a very powerful Ministry. I feel that in the very announcement which I make, I expose myself to the charge of presumption if I entertain—as I do entertain—the hope that I can offer a plan which may meet the difficulties that surround any attempt at a satisfactory settlement of this great question.

I believe, sir, there are few persons who will deny that the present University system of Ireland is unsatisfactory in not providing for the Roman Catholics of Ireland a higher education, of which they can avail themselves upon terms of equality with Protestants. I use the words higher education advisedly, that I may avoid that which has been, I cannot help thinking, the source of exaggeration and mistake. In dealing with the question of University Education, we are not dealing with the education of the great mass of the people. We have to consider the system

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which is suitable to those classes who, in any country, are likely to avail themselves of the benefits of University Education. But in this view no one who will fairly consider the question can deny that our present system is defective. It does not deal equally with Protestants and Roman Catholics. Three years ago the then Prime Minister spoke of the present state of things in the following terms :—

> Now, I will look at the question in a very simple form. What is the state of the case as to the actual enjoyment of University training by the Roman Catholics of Ireland ? I shall not enter into those details of controversy which have been handled with great ability by gentlemen on one side and the other. There are those who think, and who are bold enough to maintain, that upon the whole, considering who Roman Catholics are, considering how little property they possess, how little it is possible for them to enter upon the higher culture, their state, so far as University Education is concerned, is not very bad at this moment. I hold, on the contrary, that it is miserably bad. I go farther, and I would almost say it is scandalously bad.

I entirely concur in the words which upon that occasion the right hon. gentleman used, when he said that the settlement of this question was

> Vital to the prosperity and welfare of Ireland. For, even if we think that University Education is a matter less directly connected with the peace and happiness of the country than others on which we have formerly been called upon more than once to proceed, it must be borne in mind that when we look into the far future the well-being of Ireland must in a great degree depend on the moral and intellectual culture of her people ; and that in the promotion of that culture the efficiency of her Universities cannot fail to be a powerful and effectual instrument.

At this hour of the evening I must endeavour to compress into a compass, as brief as I can, the statement with which I must trouble the House. I come at once to that which meets us at the very threshold of this great question. The present arrangements of University Education in Ireland are unsatisfactory to the Roman Catholic people. They are so, because they do not offer them a University Education in accordance with their religious convictions. Those convictions lead them to believe that all education is imperfect—more than imperfect—is dangerous, which is not based upon religion. There is no escape from this question.

You must maintain a University system in antagonism to the convictions of the great mass of the Irish people—a system in perpetual, although it may be in subdued, war with their deepest and most sacred feelings—or you must mould that system so as to admit within it institutions which will give to the Roman Catholic people an opportunity of sharing in all the benefits, all the advantages, and all the emoluments which you attach to University Education upon the terms of perfect equality with Protestants—upon the only terms that can place them upon that equality—that is, upon terms that will recognise their deep, their conscientious conviction that religion must be interwoven with all the teaching and with all the arrangements of collegiate life.

I do not stop to argue the reasonableness of that conviction. The statesmanship is a very poor one that refuses to accept the deep-seated convictions of men as facts which it must estimate as real forces with which it has to deal. Institutions are made for men, and not men for institutions, and the man who would build up a system of University Education for Ireland from the estimates of which he omitted all calculations of the deep-seated convictions of the people, would soon find that no matter with what fair prospects his system was proposed, no matter upon what specious theories it was based, it would fail, and fail as miserably as many of your best devised plans for governing Ireland have failed, from the slight defect that they omitted to take into account the character and the feelings of the people for whom they were intended.

For myself, I am not ashamed to confess that in the conviction that education ought to be based upon religion I entirely concur. This is, at all events, a principle that has come down to us with great traditions of Christendom, Roman Catholic and Protestant. It has come to us with the authority of the wisest of those men of ancient times who, even without the light of Christianity, anticipated in the instincts of human conscience its teachings. It has come down to us with the mighty memories of men who, trained under its influence, have done good service to the commonwealth in Church and State. But for my own convictions upon this subject—convictions which are shared by the vast majority of my countrymen—I ask for a

strict principle of toleration. I will ask it to-night both for Protestant and Roman Catholic. Do not force upon us, in obedience to a small and insignificant sect of secularists, a denial in our University system of a principle which ninety-nine out of every hundred Irishmen, Protestant as well as Catholic, hold dear.

But even this is not essential to the argument I am addressing to you to-night. It is enough for me to say, as I have said, that if you desire that your University system should embrace those of the Catholic people of Ireland who would naturally look to the benefits of University Education, you must provide for them the means of having that education in such a form that their views of the necessity of its being interwoven with religion may be honestly and fairly met.

If this be the right conclusion, we have then to look at the existing state of things. I will not stop to go back upon the history of ancient University institutions in Ireland. It is enough for me to say that we find there one institution founded in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which, up to the present generation, has been the only University for Ireland. It has taken its place with the elder Universities of Great Britain and of Europe. Its degrees are recognised, not only in Oxford and Cambridge, but in every academy in Europe. The fame of its men of science is known in all lands where the higher attainments of science are valued. Its history is interwoven with that of the country. Few of the men of whom Ireland is proud have not received their education within its walls. I am old enough to remember hearing O'Connell, in a public meeting, lament that he was sent to the Continent to receive his education, because when he was ready for Trinity College, Trinity College was not ready for him. For one great section of Irish society this institution has fulfilled the functions of a National University. By it Protestant thought and intellect have been trained.

But, established as it was in the first ardour of the Reformation, it has not altogether failed in providing education for the Roman Catholic people. More than seventy years ago its statutes were so changed as to admit all creeds to the benefits of its education and the privileges of its degrees. Long before your English Universities

thought of toleration, Trinity College opened its doors to men of all religious creeds. In 1793 the Irish Parliament repealed all the Acts of Parliament which interposed obstacles to the admission of Roman Catholics to the benefits of degrees. In the lists of our Roman Catholic judges, of our Roman Catholic members of Parliament, of the men eminent in Irish public life, you find many who have won distinction in the University. There are in this House a larger number of its graduates representing Catholic than there are representing Protestant constituencies; and Protestant, as has been its character, with almost all its emoluments and offices reserved to Protestants, Trinity College has a hold, and a strong hold, upon the sympathies and respect of the whole Irish people.

I must stop for a moment to inquire upon what endowments it has accomplished all this. In the Report of the Commissioners of 1854 its revenue derived from endowments is stated to be £36,000 a year. A return obtained last year by the member for Longford makes its income from endowments £43,000. I do not stop to account for the discrepancy. I contrast this sum, whether it be £36,000 or £43,000, with the revenues of the English Universities. I need not remind the House that Trinity College is a college discharging the functions both of a University and a college. It is the one college of the Irish University, and in both characters it has endowments not much exceeding, at the outside estimate £40,000 a year. It appears by the Report of the Commission on the English Universities that the University of Oxford has endowments amounting to £29,000 a year; its colleges and halls to £307,000. Cambridge has University endowments amounting to £13,000 a year. Those of its colleges and halls amount to £264,000 a year. So that the University of Dublin has been keeping its place among the Universities of the world upon an endowment not exceeding £40,000—in contrast, and often in rivalry, with the two English Universities, with revenues of £631,000.

Now, sir, it appears to me that when we come to consider how we are to remedy the injustice that is done to the Roman Catholics of Ireland under the present arrangements, we must consider the

existence of our present University in two respects. We have a University made illustrious by great traditions, with a recognised status earned by centuries of work, and commanding for its degrees a reception all over the world. It appears to me that it would be very unwise to throw away from our Roman Catholic countrymen all these great advantages which no power and no endowments could give to a new institution. We must make the attempt to admit them fully and unreservedly into all the advantages we have acquired—into a complete partnership with all the treasures of memory that Trinity College has inherited from past times, and we must do this while we give them a University Education consonant with their own convictions—an education with which religious training and religious teaching shall be inseparably associated. In this view I believe we are led at once to the conclusion that we ought, in re-adjusting our University system, to maintain its identity unbroken, and its status and its memories unimpaired.

This is the more important aspect of the question, because it concerns the whole people. But there is another consideration not to be overlooked. Trinity College has provided a University Education that meets the wants and wishes of one great section of the people. We ought not lightly, and without necessity, to destroy this. All considerations, therefore, point to this: that in framing a measure to admit Roman Catholics to perfect equality in our University system we ought to preserve, as far as possible, the main features of that system, and, in admitting others to equal advantages, to leave to the Protestant community those which they have so long enjoyed.

I believe we can obtain all this by building on the lines of the Act passed by the Irish Parliament in 1793. That Act expressly contemplated, at a future day, a second college in the Dublin University—a college of which all the emoluments and offices should be open to Roman Catholics, although not excluding Protestants from its education. The Bill I hold in my hand is an attempt to accomplish the establishment of a second college—one that will give to Catholic parents the opportunity of obtaining for their children a University Education, in the form and manner in

which they themselves desire it should be given. After eighty-three years, I am asking the Imperial Parliament to perfect the work of liberality and toleration which an Irish Parliament, composed exclusively of Protestants, and elected exclusively by Protestants, commenced in 1793.

If the House will permit me, I will endeavour, in the first instance, to place before them the provisions proposed in the Bill for the establishment of such a college. We might, of course, incorporate a new body of nominees, either of the framers of the measure or of the Crown, but I am quite sure that we should act most unwisely if we overlooked the fact that the exigencies of their position have forced the Catholic people of Ireland, out of their own resources, without any Government aid, and without any State authority, to frame and form an institution which might discharge for them the functions of a University. The Roman Catholics of Ireland have proved their zeal and earnestness in this matter of education. Under the name of the Catholic University they have formed an institution, to the support of which they have contributed about £200,000. Maintaining itself under great difficulties —met by the rivalry of institutions offering to those who would resort to them great prizes, upon which public money is lavishly expended—it yet has held its ground, and is every year gaining upon public confidence and respect. Among its professors are men of the highest order of intellect, some of them whose scientific fame is European, and I must add that in which I know I shall be borne out by every one, no matter what religious or political opinions he may hold who has been brought in contact with the collegiate life of that institution, that nowhere do we meet with more liberality of statement, more real tolerance of spirit, than among those who have received, or are receiving, their education within the walls of that institution.

In the Bill which I ask leave to introduce I offer to the teaching body of that institution a charter of incorporation as a second college in the University, with a voice in the government of that University, and with suitable endowments. In the provisions of the Bill I have endeavoured to secure three matters which I believe to be essential to any measure of the kind. First, to give

to the Roman Catholic people an educational institution adequate to meet their wants, and framed in accordance with their convictions. Secondly, to preserve to the Protestant community the same advantages which the Bill gives to the Roman Catholic; and, lastly, to do this without lowering either the status of the Irish University or the standard of Irish University Education.

I propose, sir, that both the new college and Trinity College should be independent and self-governing bodies. To each of them the Bill leaves the exclusive superintendence of the education of its own students, subject to this, that certain subjects of study are defined as forming a necessary part of University Education. In respect of degrees, the University would have just the same power that it has now, except that I take away the right of conferring degrees of divinity. I propose instead to allow each college to confer a diploma of Doctor or Bachelor of Divinity, carrying with it no University privilege. The degree of Bachelor of Arts to be attained after four years' membership of either college upon the certificate of the college that the candidate has made proficiency in the prescribed studies. In addition to this, I propose that this proficiency should be tested by two University examinations—one at the end of the first two years; another, the degree examination, whenever after the end of the four years he presents himself for admission to his degree; these examinations to be conducted by a board of examiners chosen from each college.

I need not say, sir, that this is just the system of teaching and examination pursued both at Oxford and Cambridge. It is followed at Dublin, as far as it is possible, to distinguish between University and college examinations where you have only one college.

It will be seen that this plan regards teaching as essentially a collegiate matter—examination, as a test of fitness for a degree, as the business of the University. It is by keeping these two things perfectly distinct that we shall be able to combine two colleges, such as I propose, in one University. If we do, there is no difficulty in having one common course of study. There is no difficulty in having a common examination. Nay, more, I may, perhaps, be thought very bold if I say that there is no real difficulty in introducing into

the common course and common examination subjects which it has been sometimes, though necessary, to exclude from a University intended to embrace men of different religious creeds.

I propose to prescribe in a schedule to this Bill the course of study and of examination. I do not wish to weary the House by mentioning the details of the course that is prescribed. It has been framed with care, and, in a great degree, from the calendars of Trinity College and of the existing Catholic University. Provision is made for changes in that course by competent authority within that University itself; but, in the first instance, I have thought it necessary that the course should be prescribed; and, I venture to say, that when the Bill is printed, and the schedule prescribing the course of study is read, no one will say that the standard of University Education is lowered, or that the man who will pass an examination in that course has not received an education as liberal and as general as any that is given in any University in the kingdom. But I repeat, that in that course and in all studies I recognise the colleges as the teaching bodies and the University as the body examining and conferring degrees upon those who are tested by their examination, and are upon that examination found qualified for their degree.

But the Bill contains, on the subject of degrees, another provision to which I attach very great importance. Both Oxford and Cambridge have recently admitted students to matriculate as members of the University without entering any college. The University of Dublin has long since dispensed with either residence or attendance on lectures as a qualification for a degree, the attention of the students to the prescribed studies being tested by frequent attendance at examinations. I propose to continue that system. If any person desire to pass through the University without entering either college he will, under the provisions of this Bill, be allowed to matriculate and proceed to his degree, passing, however, frequent examinations, from which those who are members of either of the colleges are exempted. There will be thus three classes of students—those who enter in Trinity College, those who enter in the new college, and those who are University students without belonging to either college. The two first classes

will receive their teaching in their respective colleges, and will be only required to submit to an University examination twice in their course. The third class may receive their teaching where, and in what manner, they please; but they will be required, by passing periodical examinations, to give satisfactory proof that, without any collegiate superintendence, they have been taught, or, at all events, have learned the knowledge which is thought essential to a University Education.

I cannot but think that this provision ought to remove objections that I know will be made to this Bill. The measure I propose gives, it is true, to everyone the opportunity of passing to a degree in a college essentially religious in its character, but the provision I have last mentioned enables anyone to proceed to a degree without submitting himself to any religious teaching whatever. If anyone, from any reason, is unwilling to subject himself to the discipline or rules of either of the colleges, he is not therefore debarred from a University degree. He may receive his teaching in any seminary he pleases, or he may teach himself. If he learns, and proves by his examination that he has learned, he will be required to do nothing more. I need not point out in how many ways this will have a beneficial effect. Among others, it will create a species of competition with the colleges which will stimulate them to provide the best education that they can. If men can obtain degrees without collegiate residence there will be many who will avail themselves of that privilege, unless the colleges offer them real and substantial advantages. At all events, the power of choice will leave University Education free.

I have said, sir, that I propose to make the new colleges independent and self-governing. Trinity College is governed by statutes framed by various sovereigns and by an Act of Parliament which was passed within the last few years, but except where an Act of Parliament intervenes all the statutes may be altered at the pleasure of the Crown. At present Trinity College is governed by the Provost and Senior Fellows and by a Collegiate Council, in the election of which the Senate of the University have a voice. I propose to substitute for the interference of the Senate that of a congregation of its own graduates. The Collegiate Council, if this Bill passes, would exercise the same powers it does now, and be

elected in the same manner, substituting for election by all the Senate, election by those who are graduates of Trinity College.

I propose to confer the power of passing new statutes on the Congregation of Graduates, the Collegiate Council, and the Provost and Senior Fellows. No change is to be made in the statutes without the consent of these three bodies, and in some cases with the additional requisite of the consent of the Crown.

But to leave Trinity College its power of self-government, I propose to exempt it, as well as the new college, from the operation of the Act prohibiting all religious tests, and to abrogate the college statute, which was in fact the necessary consequence of that Act. The effect of this would be to restore the religious character of the college, but at the same time to leave it perfectly open to the college authorities themselves to make, with the assent of the Crown, any changes with regard to this which they thought fit.

And here, sir, speaking of that college with which I am practically acquainted—I mean, of course, Trinity College—I attach great importance to giving to an assembly representing its graduates, a voice, and to some extent, a share in its government. After all Trinity College must still continue to bear to the Protestant community the character of a University in many respects. The same may be said as to the Catholic people and the new college; but speaking as I do of the college with which I am acquainted, not only as a student and a graduate, and as having once had a share, although a small one, in its teaching department, but as a member of its Senate, I see great advantages in bringing something of a popular element to bear upon its government. I think this is done, and safely done, by the institution of a separate Senate, or, as it is called in the Bill, Congregation of the College. I should be very sorry to entrust absolute legislative powers to such a body, but I give them their power under the control of the Provost and Senior Fellows, who have been, until recently, the absolute masters of the institution in all its ordinary concerns. I am sure the discussion in a Senate of graduates of questions relating to the government of the college will infuse energy and power into the life of the institution.

I propose to establish, in substance, the same system of government in the second, that is in the Catholic College. The property,

and, to a large extent, the control of the Catholic University are now vested in an episcopal board, consisting of several of the Catholic prelates. To the board we must give a large power in the government of the college; first, because we expect them to give over to the purposes of the new college a considerable amount of property, and more than property, the good-will of an institution which they have created and fostered; but more, far more than this, because unless we yield them that power we would fail at the very outset in creating an institution suited to the convictions of the Irish Catholic people—if we did not vest in the prelates of the Catholic Church that amount of control which the Catholic people desire they should have. I propose to incorporate the present members of that board under the title of the Committee of Founders. It is a title which will, perhaps, excite less prejudice than that of Episcopal Board. It will, at all events, express a claim to control over an institution which has always been recognised, and which in this Bill is not carried nearly so far as it was in many of the Cambridge and Oxford Colleges. Vacancies occurring in the committee will be filled up by the surviving members, and there is no doubt that the Committee of Founders will practically and truly represent the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland.

In the new college, as in Trinity College, I propose to institute a congregation of the graduates of the college itself and a Collegiate Council, the latter to be partly appointed by the Committee of Founders partly elected by the Professors and partly by the Congregation of Graduates. To the Collegiate Council I propose to entrust the election of professors, subject to the veto of the Committee of Founders. I propose that statutes may be passed for the college in the same manner as for Trinity College with the assent of these three bodies—the Congregation of Graduates, the Collegiate Council, and the Committee of Founders—but I propose to give to the Founders that power of making, on their own authority, regulations on matters affecting religious teaching and morality which I am sure the Catholic people of Ireland would desire to see placed in the hands of the prelates of their Church.

I need not say, sir, that in all that concerned the internal constitution of that which is intended to be a Roman Catholic College I felt difficulties in making any proposal. The questions

relating to it are, in my mind, to be determined by Roman Catholics themselves. I have no authority to speak for anyone on the subject. All I could do was to gather opinion from those whom I thought best informed as to the feelings and sentiments of those whose opinions must be consulted. I have carefully studied the past history of the question, the resolutions that have been passed, and the correspondence that has taken place upon former occasions between the Ministers of the Crown and the Roman Catholic Prelates, and all I can say is that I hope and believe that if the House gives me leave to bring in this Bill it will be found, when that Bill is submitted in its full form to the judgment of the public, possible to settle this great question upon the principles which I have endeavoured to embody in this measure. But for the frame and proposals of the Bill I am alone responsible, except so far as that responsibility is shared by the friends who have permitted me to associate their names with mine in introducing it, and to whose judgment I have, of course, submitted the provisions it contains.

I have explained the proposed constitutions of the new colleges. As to the University itself, I propose to leave the Senate as it is, reinforced as it will be by the addition of doctors and masters who may be created by her Majesty in the charter incorporating the new college, and from time to time by the graduates that will be supplied by the new college.

The ordinary management of University affairs I propose to leave to an Academical Council, consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, the Provost of Trinity College, the Rector of the new college, four members of the Senate to be nominated by each college, and four to be elected by the Senate upon the principle of cumulative voting. Upon some matters the Bill requires the assent of three-fourths of the members present to a resolution.

For the University itself, I propose a legislative machinery analogous to that of the colleges. The Bill provides that new statutes may be passed with the assent both of the Academic Council and the Senate, but I add to this a provision that no such statute should be passed if it is negatived either by the Provost and Senior Fellows of Trinity College, or by the Committee of Founders of the new college. It is right that security should be

taken that no essential change should be made in the University arrangements without the consent of those who, if this Bill comes into effect, will be parties to the arrangement it makes.

I have stated to the House the outline of the plan by which I propose to incorporate a new college into the existing system of the University of Dublin. I come now to the question of endowments.

I propose to take for the endowment of the University and the new college a considerable sum from a fund which belongs peculiarly to the Irish people, and which I feel strongly ought to be held sacred for purposes like that to which I propose to apply it—I mean the remnant which your management has left of the magnificent revenues which the piety of ancient times had devoted to provide for the religious needs of the Irish people. I use this language, not in reference to the strange transactions in which so large a portion of the remaining revenues of the Irish Church were squandered on the cost of disestablishing it. I speak in a larger sense. I remember reading, many years ago, a statement made by an eminent prelate of the Protestant Church, Dr. Elrington, who was Provost of Trinity College, and afterwards Bishop of Ferns, that there had been Church property in Ireland sufficient, if properly managed, not only to provide for the sustenance of the clergy of all religious denominations, but, after doing this, to provide for the University and school education of the entire people. The statement was no exaggeration. Of that noble national property all that remains to the Irish people is a contingent interest, at least an interest not yet realised, estimated at something more than five millions of pounds. It is in this fund that we should find endowments for the new institution we are creating, and, for myself, I earnestly hope that no portion of that fund may ever be applied to purposes more foreign to those to which the property, of which it is the remnant, was consecrated.

The University itself, as distinguished from the college, should be provided with the means of carrying on its own business, of providing for its examinations and prizes at those examinations. It ought also to be provided with the means of instituting fellowships and scholarships, open to all students; and, after providing for all those necessary expenses, it ought to have a fund at

its disposal sufficient to meet those demands for scientific or literary purposes which may always arise. Following in some respects the Bill introduced by the then Government in 1873, this Bill proposes that there should be fifteen University Fellowships, held for life, and endowed each from the University revenues with the sum of £200 a year. They are to be open to all graduates, and be given away after an examination conducted by the board of examiners, appointed as I have already described. Of course all these fifteen should not be filled up at once, but gradually, until the number is completed. Some of the fellowships might derive a further income if their holders should accept the office of tutor to the non-collegiate students; and as to all of them, regulations, either as to University duties or otherwise, might be made which would, as a general rule, insure their resignation whenever the holder had attained a position which made him independent of the emoluments attached to a fellowship.

In addition to this, the Bill proposes that there should be given away in each year, by public examinations, among those taking their degree, two exhibitions of £100 a year, tenable for five years. There are in Trinity College 70 foundation scholarships obtainable only by under-graduates, and which, estimating some small money payments and the advantages of chambers and commons, are worth probably £60 a year. But they are sought after with an eagerness far beyond their worth. The roll of the scholars contains the names of most of the men who have been illustrious in our past history. Every man is proud of having his name inscribed on the book on which he sees before him the names of Edmund Burke, of Curran, of Plunket, and many others with which history has made him familiar. A scholarship in Trinity College gives the privilege of a vote at the election of members for the University; the privilege continues for life, and at every contested election it is interesting to see the anxiety with which every one who can do it claims his right to vote as an ex-scholar instead of recording it by virtue of a degree. I propose to open these 70 scholarships to all students of the University. If the successful student is a member of Trinity College, he will receive all the collegiate advantages which belong to the

position of a scholar; if he is not a member of Trinity College, and does not elect to become one, I propose that Trinity College should pay him an annual stipend equivalent to the value of those advantages.

The Royal Commissioners of Education in Ireland have founded in the University thirty exhibitions for under-graduates, ranging from £50 to £20. These exhibitions are at present confined to pupils of the Royal Schools, out of whose revenues they are endowed. The Bill proposes to open them to all students.

There are at present in Trinity College 26 junior fellows, making, with the 7 senior fellows, 33 fellows. The number has been greatly increased within the last forty years, and I am sure that it far exceeds that which is requisite for the wants of the college. The Bill proposes to transfer 10 of these fellowships to the University as they fall vacant, Trinity College paying to those elected to fill them an annual stipend equivalent to the income and which a fellow of Trinity College derives from the college advantages revenues. This would not exceed £100 a year. Whatever may be wanting to make up the value of £200 is to be paid out of the University funds.

The University, therefore, under this plan would give away fellowships and prizes open to all its graduates—twenty-five fellowships worth £200 a year, ten exhibitions worth £100 a year each; to under-graduates: seventy scholarships worth £60 a year each, and thirty exhibitions varying from £50 to £20. But the House will remember that all the under-graduate scholarships and exhibitions are provided out of funds independent of the University, and there is a contribution of one-half of the expense of ten of the fellowships from Trinity College, so that the charge upon the University funds would be fifteen fellowships at £200 a year each, £3,000; half of ten fellowships, £1,000; and ten exhibitions, £100 each, £1,000—making in all an annual charge of £5,000.

But in addition to these prizes, open to those who are actually students in the university, I make a proposal in this Bill, which I am sure will be valued by all who take an interest in intermediate education in Ireland—I propose to place at the disposal of the University authority to be given away in each year, fifty pensions or exhibitions of £20 a year each, tenable for three years under suitable regulations, for young men of merit who may need assistance in preparing themselves for a University Education. This will add a charge of £3,000 a year upon the University revenues, making in all a sum of £8,000 a year to be spent in the manner I have mentioned. I do not believe anyone will say that I am asking an extravagant endowment for the University if I ask that the Church Commissioners shall provide out of the surplus at their disposal

a sum of £300,000, bearing interest at the rate of 4 per cent. until paid. Assuming the money, when paid, to be laid out so as to produce the same income, this would leave to the University an income from endowment of £4,000 for all other purposes. To this, of course, must be added whatever might be received from the students in the form of fees. I propose to leave this fund at the disposal of the Academic Council, guarding its power over it by this, that in any vote for money beyond providing for the ordinary expenditure the votes of two-thirds must concur.

I come now to the colleges: Trinity College has an endowment, as stated in, I think, an exaggerated estimate, of £43,000. A considerable part of this comes from private sources. In the Bill of 1873 the late Ministry proposed that Trinity College should pay to the funds of the University a direct money contribution of £12,000 a year. I propose a contribution in a different form—a form that will not in the least cripple the resources of the college. The surrender of the seventy foundation scholarships to the University, taking the cost of each at £60 annually, is equivalent to a money contribution of £4,200 a year; but, in other respects, it is a contribution far beyond their money value. In the transfer of the ten fellowships there is another annual contribution of £1,000. Trinity College has at present certain professorships which may be fairly considered as a portion of the University expenses. The professors in certain faculties must preside over the granting of degrees in those faculties. In all matters of this nature I believe it of importance to observe the old established usages. These professors are—the Regius Professor of Law, with a salary of £500 a year; the Regius Professor of Physic, of Surgery, and last, not least, of Music. All these I propose to make University professors, to be nominated by the Academic Council, but the salaries still to be paid as now by the college, and I add to these the Professor of Astronomy, the Royal Astronomer of Ireland. The salary of this professor is now £700 a year, independent of a residence at at the Observatory with several acres of land. His assistant receives £200 a year. In addition to this, there are attached to the professorship the buildings of the Observatory and the valuable instruments; all this I propose to hand over to the University. The salaries and emoluments of these different professorships, still continuing charges on the college revenues, will amount to more than £2,000 a year. In these various ways the college will contribute, if not to the University, yet to University purposes, an income of nearly £8,000, and as I propose to open to all students fourteen studentships of £100 a year each, recently founded by an act of

most generous liberality of the Board of Trinity College; this will increase the contribution made by Trinity College to university purposes to an amount equalling an annual sum of about £9,000. But this contribution will be made not by imposing any new burden on the revenues of Trinity College, but by a provision that places, for which they are at present bound to provide out of these revenues, shall be open, as they are now, to all members of the University, although the limits of the University are no longer identical with Trinity College.

In addition to this, there are some annual prizes and medals, which will be open to all students; they are not very large in amount, but many of them carry with them associations that make them prized. I may be forgiven if I mention the Berkeley gold medals for proficiency in Greek, the result of a bequest by the illustrious philosopher to whom I feel proud that I can trace even a remote relationship. These may be small matters, but they associate the University in its remodelled form with the traditions of the past. It is a less sentimental benefit that gives to the University an interest in the library, including the magnificent collection of ancient Irish manuscripts, which is now the exclusive property of Trinity College.

For the endowment of the new college I propose that on the acceptance of the charter and the vesting of the existing property of the Catholic University in the newly-incorporated college, a sum of £30,000 should be handed over at once to the authorities of the college to erect suitable buildings. It will be, of course, for the authorities of the college to determine the most convenient site, either in their present situation or in any other, within a certain distance from the centre of the City of Dublin, which I propose to fix at three miles. I would prefer they should be placed in the immediate vicinity of Trinity College, and the Bill gives power to the governing body of Trinity to sell or lease for this purpose a portion of their ground, if the authorities of the new college should be desirous of that site; but this is a matter entirely for the college itself.

There are many reasons which make it desirable that substantial proof should be given of the continued interest of the Catholic people in the establishment of the new college, and I therefore think that as soon as a further sum of £20,000 is subscribed, making in all a contribution of £220,000, then, and not till then, double that amount, or a sum of £440,000, should be paid out of the Church surplus, bearing interest at 4 per cent. until paid.

I ought to have stated that in vesting the property of the present institution in the newly-incorporated College, I propose

to exempt a very beautiful church now used as the chapel of the institution. The property will continue vested in its present owners. I omitted also to say that a sum of money, which I fix at £30,000, will be required to provide new buildings for the University. This would make the entire charge upon the Church surplus to amount to £800,000.

I need not say that I omit many details ; I only wish to add that the Bill empowers her Majesty to incorporate any other college in the University of Dublin, provided that it should appear expedient to her Majesty to do so, if its founders fix its site within the distance of three miles from the centre of the city. The mere charter of incorporation will give to such a college all the privileges of other colleges as to its students proceeding to degrees, but no change is to be made in the University except by a statute passed in the manner I have mentioned by the University itself.

I have now laid before the House, at much greater length than I could have wished, the general outline of the plan which is embodied in the Bill I ask leave to bring in. Of course I have not ventured to detain you by dwelling on minute details. I trust I have said enough to explain its general features. The proposal, expressed briefly, is to institute a second college in the existing University of Dublin, to make that college one in which the Roman Catholic people of Ireland can receive an education in accordance with their own convictions, and to leave Trinity College retaining its Protestant and religious character, to fulfil to the Protestant people the very functions which it has so long and so usefully discharged, and, at the same time, to permit the national University to extend the benefit of its prizes and its degrees to men who desire to pass through it without submitting to the teaching of either of these colleges.

The plan I propose secures, at all events, three great objects : it gives perfect liberty of religious teaching to both Catholics and Protestants, while it forces that teaching upon none ; it does not lower the standard or the status of the University Education ; and it leaves both to the colleges and to the University perfect independence of that State interference which in every country has marred and degraded every system of University Education to which it has been applied.

Will the House permit me before I sit down to refer to some testimonies to show how by the Irish people the principle of such a measure is likely to be received. My first statement is taken from a pastoral signed by all the Roman Catholic prelates of Ireland on the 20th of October, 1871. In that pastoral, after asserting the necessity of basing education on religion, and

pointing out the conditions requisite in any plan that will meet the convictions of the Roman Catholic people of Ireland, conditions I must say in which I can find nothing unreasonable or extreme, they go on to say:—

All this can, we believe, be attained by modifying the constitution of the Dublin University so as to admit of the establishment of a second college within it in every respect equal to Trinity College, and conducted on purely Catholic principles, in which your bishops shall have full control in all things regarding faith and morals, securing thereby the spiritual interests of your children, placing at the same time Catholics on a perfect equality with Protestants, as to degrees, emoluments and other advantages.

To show that this assent to a common University is given in no niggardly or illiberal spirit, I will ask your permission to read an extract from a tract written by Dr. Woodlock, the eminent and accomplished clergyman who presides as Rector over the Catholic University.

Some years ago Dr. Woodlock thus expressed himself at the incorporation of a Roman Catholic College in a National University:—

The advantages of a Catholic College in a National University may be summed up in one sentence—it would afford us the widest range of competition, and give us at the same time separate education for Catholics.

I. The great, indeed the paramount, advantage of competition is admitted upon all hands. By it emulation is kept up among youth, their latent energies are evoked, and their intellectual powers developed to the utmost. A system, then, which brings into competition all the youth of the nation, must possess great educational advantages above any other, and such, precisely, is a National University, where all the intellect of the country would have to compete in a common arena for degrees, honours, and other literary and scientific distinctions. Moreover, this emulation would be increased by the fact, that there would be among the various colleges, a struggle for intellectual superiority, which could not fail to be productive of the greatest advantages to literature and science, each striving to out-do the others in the race, in which all would be entered.

II. Again, the students of the Catholic College having won, as no doubt they would win, distinctions in the intellectual arena, not only would their equality or superiority with respect to their Protestant fellow-countrymen be admitted at once, and this without any of that hesitation or delay which is sure to occur before their literary or scientific standing will be recognised, if their passport to distinction bear the signature of an exclusive institution, but also the great question, whether in truth Catholic education does cramp the human mind, would be decided by a tribunal whose authority Protestants and Catholics must admit alike. It is most important for the social interests of Catholics that the university degree borne by them should be a *bona fide* mark of distinction, won in open competition with their fellow-countrymen of all denominations. It is also of the greatest importance that the true intellectual value of Catholic education should be publicly proved and recognised by all.

These, remember, are the words of a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic at the head of that Roman Catholic institution which many of you believe to be narrow and intolerant and exclusive in its principles. He challenges you to submit the result of the education given by that institution to an open competition in which Protestants, members of kindred, I will not say rival institutions, are to take their place among the judges. The benefit he claims for the Catholic institution is that those who receive its education should be admitted to free competition, that the value of that education should be submitted to this test. You tell me you wish for young men of different religious persuasions to be brought together that they may carry into after life the memories and the associations of early life. What is there in those memories and associations more likely to bring men together than those of the emulation and rivalry for the honours which were offered to the competition of their early years? To that honourable emulation you are asked by a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic to invite young Irishmen, whether Catholic or Protestant. You, the British House of Commons, may reject that appeal, but if you do, never again speak of the illiberality and exclusiveness of the advocates of those who ask for a system of Roman Catholic education.

I have quoted for you the words of one whose position entitles me to regard him as speaking the sentiments of the Catholic community. Let me say that indications are every day showing themselves on the part of the Protestant people of Ireland of a desire to meet such sentiments in a spirit of corresponding liberality. I believe that many, very many, of the most distinguished members of the Protestant Church would now gladly preserve religious education for their own people even on the terms of conceding similar privileges to their Roman Catholic countrymen. Many of the best and most distinguished members of the Dublin University are advocates of the plan which I propose. When I mention Dr. Haughton and M'Ivor as two who have committed themselves in published essays to its support, I mention names that command the respect of all, but names that are only representative of the moral and intellectual power that belongs to those who desire to see this great question settled, and settled at once and for ever, upon the principles of the plan I propose.

In the hope that you will give me leave to bring in this Bill, I fearlessly submit the plan to the criticism of this House, of my countrymen of all creeds and classes, and of the British public. I know and feel that in proposing a system of University Education, essentially interwoven with religion, I am running

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counter to the prejudices of many of those near me for whose advocacy of equal rights for Ireland I cheerfully and gladly acknowledge our obligations. But surely I may say to them that if their own principles are to be carried into effect upon this vital question of the education of their children, you must yield to the feelings, the more than feelings, the deep-seated, the conscientious convictions of the Irish people themselves. Some of you have said that you have felt constrained to give the Irish people their own way upon the question of closing public-houses on Sundays. Have we not a better claim to have our own way as to the character of the institutions that regulate the higher culture of our sons? There are in this House those who sympathise with me in the conviction of the necessity of basing education on religion, but in whose views I must encounter the strong prejudice that is entertained against anything that seems like making a provision for the teaching of the tenets of the faith which is held by the great majority of the Irish people. I have left myself no time to argue the question. This is not, perhaps, the occasion on which I should do so; but yet may I venture to remind you that your choice in Ireland is between abandoning altogether religious education and providing for an education that will not ignore the religion of the people. The days are gone by when you can maintain Protestant institutions unless you are willing to let Roman Catholic ones grow up by their side. Why, I ask of all parties in this House, will you not apply to Ireland the principles which have been established in so many of your colonies? I ask of you to mould your institutions to the feelings and the conscience of the people, instead of entering on the vain and odious effort to break or bend the conscience and will of the people to institutions which you force upon a reluctant and a struggling nation. In this matter of education, pre-eminently and above all others, you must feel that you can only succeed with the assent and co-operation of the people; and in the belief that the plan I propose will attain that assent and co-operation, I ask your permission to submit it to your judgment by moving for leave to bring in a Bill to make better provision for University Education in Ireland.

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